

Purpose and Objectives of The Indiana Highway Needs Study

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There is underway a detailed review of Indiana's road and street system with the objective of recommending to the General Assembly steps which will provide the citizens of the state with adequate highways for at least the next 20 years. This study is a great interest to the owners of the more than 2 million vehicles registered in the state—the persons who use the highways and who pay for them. It is of interest, also, to every unit of local government which receives allocations from the Motor Vehicle Highway Account.

The study is not yet at a stage where specific recommendations can be made but we will review what has been done and what can be expected to take place during the study.

The members of this panel are well acquainted with the purpose, background, and status of the highway needs and fiscal study. Our plan is to give each member an opportunity to make a statement about the study from his viewpoint; we hope to stimulate questions from the audience as a result of these statements.

Actual work on the study began in July, 1965, with the development of a detailed work program and cost estimate. The final printed report is scheduled to be ready to present to the members-elect of the 1967 Legislature immediately after next fall's election.

Various studies have been made from time to time which have shed some light on the estimated highway needs of Indiana. Purdue undertook a study of this nature in the 1950's. The Indiana State Highway Commission and the Bureau of Public Roads have also undertaken limited needs and fiscal studies. The Legislature has authorized other general highway studies between sessions and the 1963 session directed the Indiana Commission on State Tax and Financing Policy to conduct a fiscal study of Indiana's highway system.

It soon became apparent to the commission that a fiscal study, to be of real value to the legislature, must be based upon detailed cost and traffic estimates which are developed during a comprehensive high-

way needs study. It was decided that a fiscal study would be undertaken but with limited objectives.

A historical survey was made of Indiana's road and street laws. Sources and uses of highway funds were explored. A forecast of highway use through 1985 was made and a report was given about the impact on local communities of various proposed changes in the Motor Vehicle Highway Account.

This information was presented to the legislature with the recommendation that a comprehensive needs and fiscal study be undertaken to supplement and expand this report. Acting upon this recommendation, the legislature adopted a resolution calling for such a highway study. The resolution outlined the study and included a directive to:

- (a) Make an engineering study and inventory of the present highway system serving the state
- (b) Prepare a forecast of future needs for highways between 1965 and 1985
- (c) Establish a classification system for all highways and streets according to present and future use
- (d) Study estimated costs and prepare a plan for equitable and adequate financing of Indiana's roads and streets
- (e) Prepare and recommend legislation needed to give the state a balanced and integrated transportation system

With this directive from the legislature, Lt. Gov. Rock, as chairman of the Legislative Advisory Commission, appointed a ten-member committee to give direction and guidance to the study. Six members are legislators, Whitehead represents the State Highway Commission, Mayor Zeis of Fort Wayne acts as spokesman for the cities, and Commissioner VanDeWalle of Mishawaka, is the countys' representative. The tenth member is from the Indiana Department of Commerce. Senator Robert Peterson was named chairman and Senator Charles Maddox, vice-chairman. Representative William Babincsak, Munster, is secretary to the committee.

The committee organized itself in May, 1965, and, recognizing the scope of the study was beyond a part-time committee, explored the possibility of requesting Purdue or Indiana University to undertake the study. When both these organizations declined because of staff shortages, private consultants were interviewed. Two South Bend engineering firms were selected and they formed a joint-venture to conduct the study. Federal financing was arranged to cover three-fourths of the study through the efforts of the State Highway Commission and the study received final approval during early October.

Indiana's study is unique in that a report will be prepared for each

county, including functional classification of local roads and streets plus a recommended program for improvement. The committee believes these 92 separate reports will prove valuable to local communities, particularly, those too small to afford a full-time engineering staff.

Another strong feature of this study is the appointment by the parent committee of a technical advisory committee and a citizens' advisory committee. The membership of these two committees totals 46 and includes engineers, economists, planners, tax experts and representatives of highway user groups, contractors, suppliers and so on. These two committees advise with the consultant regarding construction costs and practices, prices, available data, etc. These individuals have contributed greatly already to the accuracy of the study. On the other hand, the committee has held open meetings and made informational mailings to keep each individual aware of the study's progress and, when appropriate, recommendations.

This is, by far, the most comprehensive study yet made of the total highway picture in Indiana. It includes, but goes beyond, the measurement of total State needs and examines closely the whole administrative and financial structure of those governmental agencies with highway responsibilities.

Its basic purpose is to provide the 1967 Legislature with sufficient facts upon which to base a restatement of legislative intent and policy regarding the administration and financing of Indiana's more than 100,000 miles of roads and streets.

The first statement by a panel member is from Reed Winslow, project manager for the study, with Cole and Williams Engineering.